

# PLAIN TALKS

October 1990

Volume 69 Number 6

## NISCO builds a new foundation with industry

Gulf States' past  
meets present

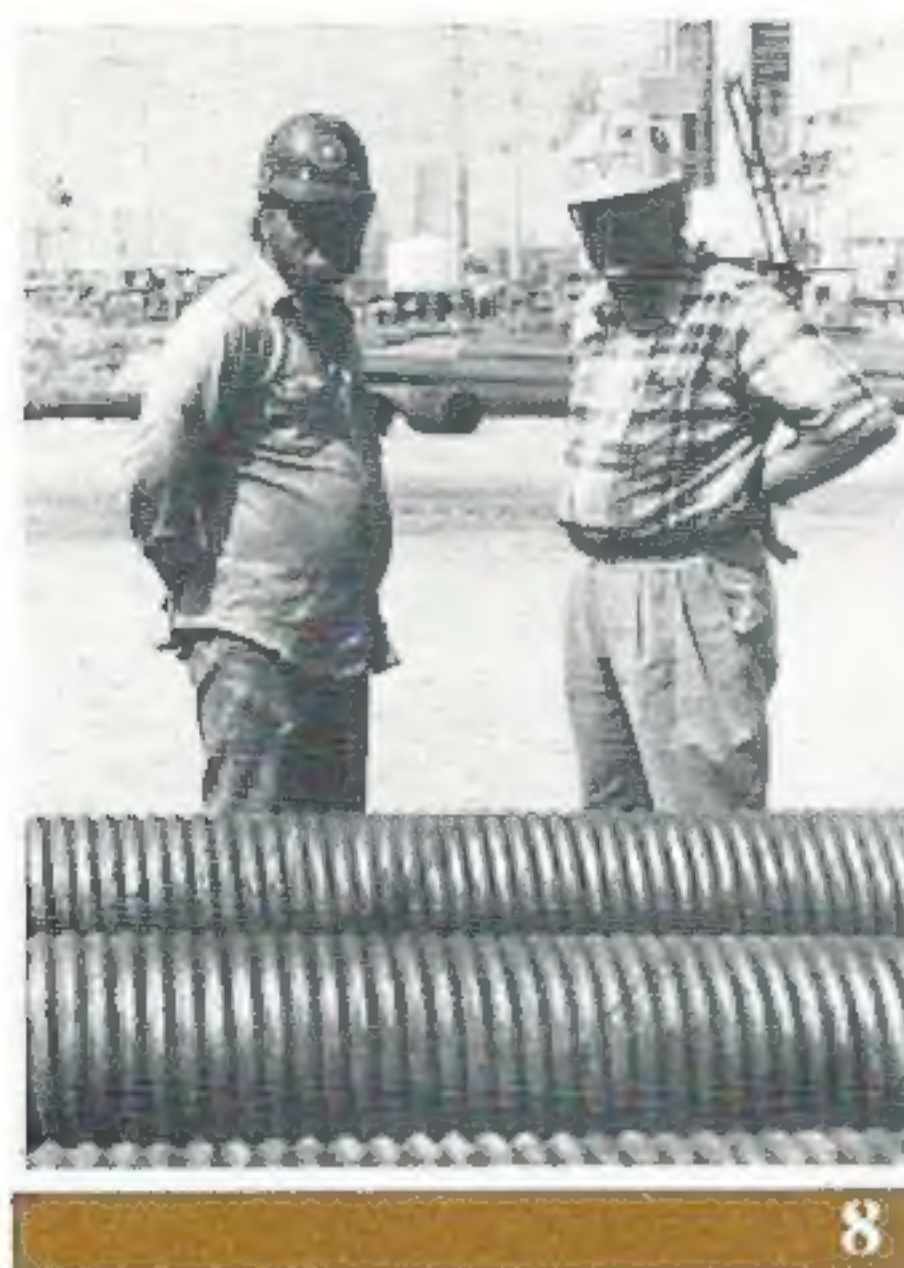
Willow Glen  
beats the heat

Employee reserves  
answer the call



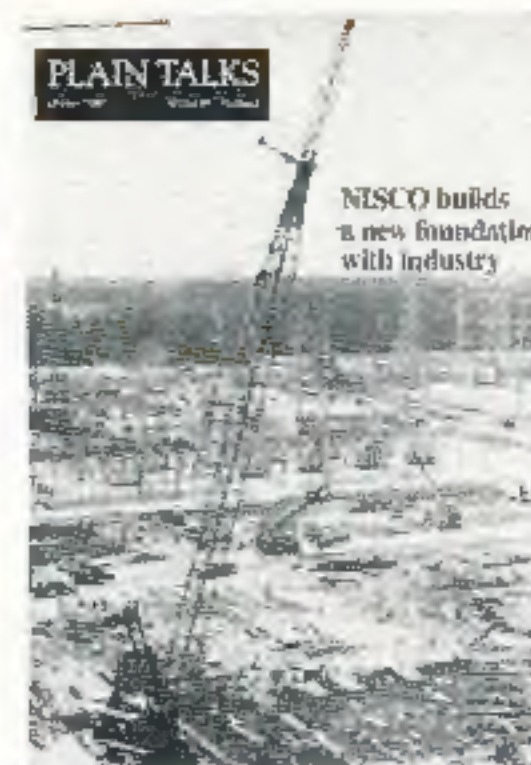
# PLAIN TALKS

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## About the cover

Construction has begun at the NISCO site next to Nelson Station in Westlake. NISCO is a cogeneration joint venture including GSU, Citgo, Conoco and Vista. This is the first large scale power project dedicated solely to burning petroleum coke. Photo by Scott Harper. (Pages 8-9)



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## Jeanmard goes back to the future



*L to R, Jeanmard talks Cajun French with Calvin Hebert, senior vice president-external affairs, during his recent visit to Edison Plaza.*

story and photo by Mark Viguet

"If the company knew I was going to live this long, they probably wouldn't have retired me so early," Philip Jeanmard says with a Cajun accent and a hearty laugh. Jeanmard, 101, is Gulf States Utilities' oldest living retiree.

Born in 1889 in Youngsville, La., Jeanmard has been a Beaumont resident for 63 years. He began working for GSU in 1927 and retired in 1955, when he was working as night janitor. Jeanmard worked in the old GSU building in Beaumont before the company moved into what is now the Liberty-Pearl office. The active 101-year-old lives alone, cooks his own meals and cares for his garden of okra, peppers, greens, onions and other edibles.

He recently visited GSU's Edison Plaza with Jim Braswell and Jerry Stokes, also GSU retirees.

"I wanted to visit Youngsville and the new Gulf States building before I die,"

Jeanmard says. "Now, I've made it to both places."

Jeanmard was impressed with the corporate headquarters and the GSU employees he met during his visit.

"Boy, that building is *big*. I almost got lost walking around in there," Jeanmard says. "Everything sure was different when I worked at the old building. Even the restrooms at the old building were small. When I went into the restrooms at the new place, I thought I was in another office!"

"And those people (GSU employees) are the best I've ever met—and they were the best I ever worked with, too," he says. "I talked to so many people and they were all so nice."

Jeanmard made his way to Beaumont in 1927 after he was laid off from his job in Lake Charles.

"I told my wife we need to go to Beaumont to find work, and that's what we did," he

says. "I could barely speak English (his preferred language is Cajun French), and I've never been to a schoolhouse, but I went to work for GSU three days after I arrived in town and worked until I retired.

"You need school now—you can't just go out and find a job working a mule and a plow like the old days. All my children went to school," says Jeanmard, the father of 11 girls and 4 boys.

Jeanmard has lived in the same house in Beaumont for 50 years.

"I like doing my own cooking and housekeeping," he says. "That way, I can do it the way I like it.

"I tell you, when I went to work for GSU, I had nothing but children," Jeanmard says. "After all these years, I'm living comfortable. Tell them all down at GSU I love 'em."



## River Bend employees respond quickly to highway accidents



Fire department volunteers, Doug Hines, Roy Wilson and Jimmy Blakley, find reward in serving their community. "We live in the community; we support the community."

by Rick Harvin

In less than 72 hours, several River Bend employees responded as members of the Wakefield, La., Volunteer Fire Department to two major vehicle accidents involving more than 25 injuries, and, in one case, a fatality. It all started on Sunday evening, July 8.

At approximately 9:45 p.m., a car carrying nine people collided head-on with a van containing 10 people on Highway 61, near Afton Villa Plantation, a few miles north of St. Francisville. Several area emergency organizations, including the Wakefield Fire Department, were notified.

"I spent 21 months in Vietnam, and this incident was a lot like that," notes Jimmy Blakley, supervisor-American Society of Mechanical Engi-

neers, section XI, in-service inspection, River Bend. With 19 injuries involving adults and children, the scene looked like a war zone.

Blakley, a Wakefield resident and member of its volunteer fire department, was one of

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*"I spent 21 months in Vietnam and this incident was a lot like that."*

Jimmy Blakley

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many people who came to the aid of accident victims.

Other GSUers from the Wakefield Fire Department who responded to the scene were Bob Stogner, communications foreman; Roy Wilson, radwaste foreman; Wes Robertson III, communications serviceman; and Doug Hines,

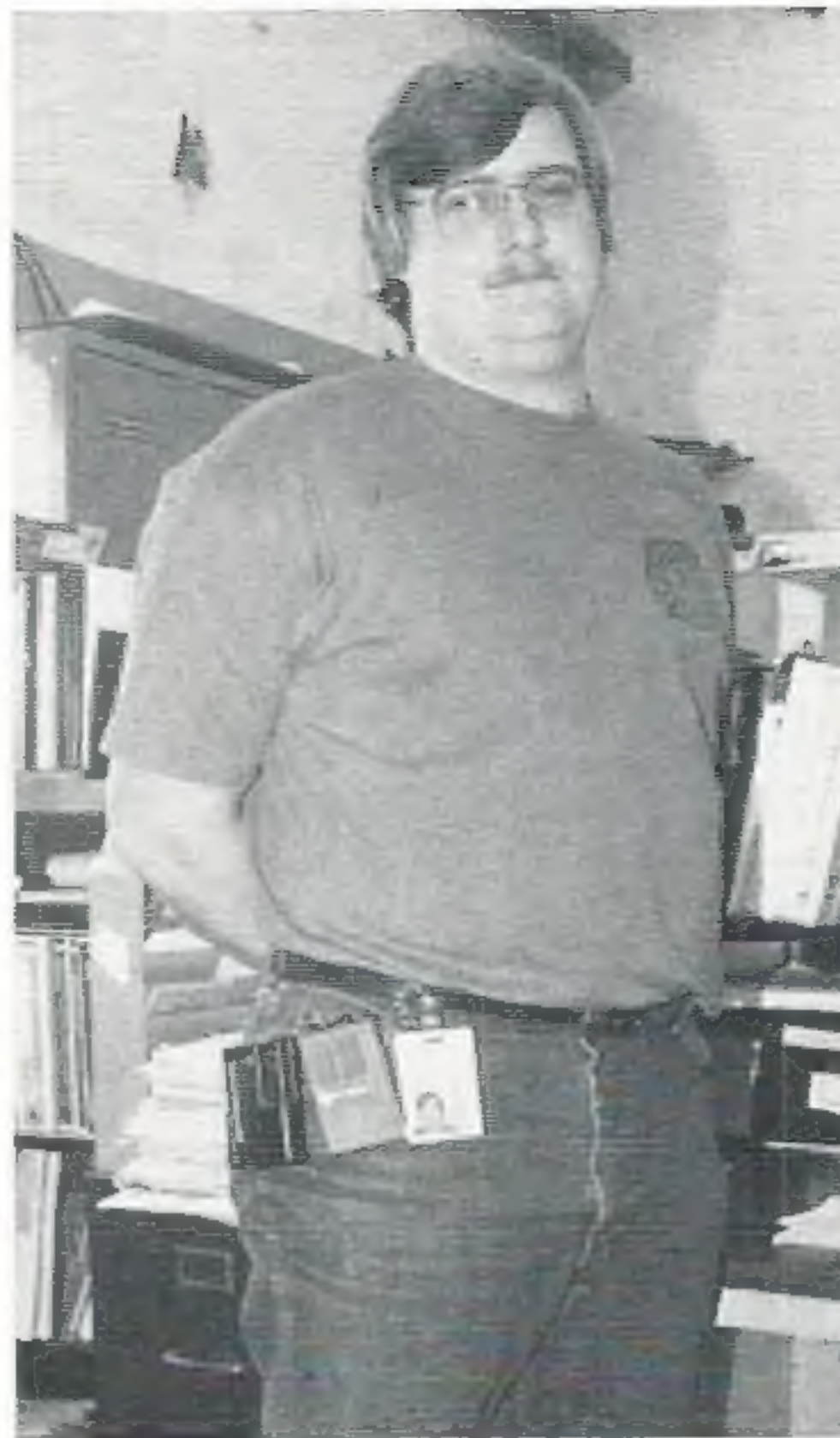
communications technician first class.

Before the night ended, several area fire departments, hospitals and ambulances, plus medical helicopter evacuation units, were involved. "Everyone did a great job," says Robertson.

Stogner, who got the call at home on a portable radio, was one of the first persons on the scene. "I took a quick look around. I saw people needing immediate attention," he recalled.

Stogner spent a lot of time stabilizing the woman who had driven the car. Neck collars, backboards and gear used to extricate people from the vehicles came from several sources, as the individual fire departments and emergency services pooled their resources





Left, "You talk to the victim, see if he's conscious, check for bleeding, see if his breathing's okay and stabilize him," says Litherland. Right, "I took a quick look around. I saw people needed immediate attention," says Stogner.

to care for the injured.

Although several victims were in critical condition, there were no fatalities. Emergency medical personnel noted that, without the prompt response and attention provided by people like the Wakefield volunteer firemen, several of the injured might have died.

"One five-year-old girl had almost stopped breathing," comments Hines. Fortunately, she was revived.

Wilson matter-of-factly said of his participation, "I was there to assist in whatever capacity I could." That kind of practical statement came from all the GSUers on the scene.

In a very fortunate coincidence, several members of the Wakefield Fire Department had just completed the training—training provided by River

Bend personnel after hours and off the plant site—and testing known as the first responder course.

Robertson taught the 40-hour class, starting May 30 and ending on July 5, just three days before the accident.

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*"One five-year-old girl had almost stopped breathing."*

Doug Hines

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"The time and effort that went into this training showed," says Robertson of the course. In addition to Robertson, Stogner and Blakley had qualified as first responders.

Discussing what the volunteers did, Blakley said, "We maintained, we stabilized...and we prayed." He praised the

group effort, saying, "No one person did it. It was everybody or nobody...it was teamwork."

By the time all the work was done, it was the early morning of Monday, July 9. All was quiet. But, the calm would not last.

On Wednesday, July 11, on the same highway five miles north of the Sunday accident, another wreck involving multiple injuries shattered the quiet of the usually-peaceful countryside.

About 5:30 p.m., a truck going north crossed the center line and struck a southbound truck head on. That second truck went into a ditch and burst into flames. The driver was pronounced dead at the scene.

The northbound truck then struck a third truck, as another





*These GSUers from River Bend, as members of the Wakefield Volunteer Fire Department, responded to two major vehicle accidents in less than three days. Left to right are: Doug Hines, Chuck Hockman, Roy Wilson, Melissa Litherland, Wes Robertson III, Jimmy Blakley and Bob Stogner.*

major accident exploded onto the landscape. Unlike the Sunday incident, a fire was involved. Again, area organizations, including the Wakefield Fire Department, got the calls for help.

Stogner, Blakley, Hines and Robertson went to this accident, also. Other GSU River Bend employees on the scene were Chuck Hockman, senior quality assurance engineer, and Melissa Litherland, chemical engineer-design engineering.

"I worked a water hose on the truck, trying to cool down the vehicle," Hockman said about the truck.

Meanwhile, gas from the other trucks, one of which was carrying diesel fuel in a 100-gallon tank, was leaking into the same ditch where the flaming truck sat.

As water alone would do no good on such a leak, Stogner and Hines began using shovels to dig a place for diverting that fuel from the truck already on fire. "Then we got the foam (chemicals, in 5-gallon buckets, used in such situations) on the fuel, and that helped," explains Hines.

Litherland, whose husband Earl is a volunteer fireman in Wakefield, came to the scene with her husband to see what she could do. She wound up helping one of the injured men at the accident.

"You talk to the victim, see if he's conscious and alert, check for bleeding, see if his breathing's okay and stabilize him," Litherland comments.

What was the reaction to a second major emergency in less than three days? "It's just

normal for me to jump and go," answers Robertson.

The fire, which was so intense it scorched pine tree limbs some 20 feet above the ground, was extinguished. The combined efforts of the firefighters, the sheriff's department and the emergency medical crews defused a situation that could have been much worse.

All the GSUers involved mentioned the "great job" done by employees assisting victims of both accidents. When asked why they volunteered in the first place, the entire "GSU crew" had variations on this statement by one who explained, "We live in the community; we support the community."



# Summer heatwave activates Unit 3

story by Pris Gallagher  
photo by Ray Jackson

The summer of 1990 brought good news for the employees of Willow Glen Station with the announcement May 21 that Unit 3, a 500-megawatt Westinghouse turbine generator, would be running after five years in extended reserve shut-down. For the first time in many years, all units were operating, providing needed electricity for GSU customers during the summer heat wave.

The news provided needed optimism for the 198 employees, who from time to time have seen all five units shut down, victims of a sluggish economy coupled with competition from newer base-load units such as Nelson Coal and River Bend.

"August-like weather in June saw the company faced with the pleasant problem of needing additional generation to meet customer demand," says Robert Reid, Unit 3 supervisor.

Coordinated by Reid, a start-up team was formed to develop a detailed scope of work and assign target completion dates to major milestones. Technical assistance was provided by the Production Support group in Edison Plaza.

The start-up work was divided into three categories: boiler, turbine generator and auxiliary systems, with crews assigned specific responsibilities, many being the same employees who prepared the unit for storage during the summer of 1985.

Thorough inspections were conducted to determine the scope of work, then crews began removing equipment and materials such as dehumidifiers. This equipment was installed to protect the unit from rust and corrosion during extended reserve shut-down.

Crews worked six, and in some cases, seven days a week, inspecting, cleaning and readying the individual system components.

Corrosion necessitated the replacement of the main gas burner tips on the boiler, then, once the unit was on-line, an infrared heat-seeking instrument showed the need for replacement insulation.

Further tests indicated the boiler was otherwise in good shape and no additional maintenance was needed.

Inspections and subsequent tests on the main turbine

showed no major work was necessary; it had been overhauled just prior to shut-down in 1985.

The exciter, used to create a magnetic field, had been used on another unit and was reinstalled on the generator. The generator and exciter needed repairs and a Westinghouse service representative was brought in to assist.

Auxiliary systems, especially the condensor, provided the majority of difficulties. Inspections showed heavy corrosion and the need to remove, clean and reinstall such parts as tubes, oil coolers and suction side strainers. Leaks had to be sealed on the high-pressure heaters and various valves.

But, hard work does pay off, as evidenced by the fact the targeted completion date, July 15, was beaten by 13 days. Forty-two calendar days were all that were needed to successfully place Unit 3 back on-line.

The unit was brought off-line Sept. 10 but will be maintained in ready reserve status with major systems checked periodically to maintain peak availability.



*Left to right, Walter Morgan, control operations foreman, and Robert Reid, Unit 3 supervisor, inspect the megawatt meter in the control room showing Unit 3 on-line at 250 megawatts.*



# NISCO breaks new ground



*Richardson overlooks the area where petroleum coke will be delivered and crushed before being sent to the circulating fluidized bed combustors.*

story and photos by Scott Harper

**Industrial Riddle #107:** What do you get when you cross three industrial customers with GSU?

**Answer:** The Nelson Industrial Steam Company (NISCO).

NISCO is a cogeneration joint venture formed in 1988 by Lake Charles industrial customers Citgo Petroleum Corporation, Conoco Inc., Vista Chemical Co. and Gulf States for the purpose of generating electricity to GSU and supplying steam to certain industrial customers.

"There's no other project like this in the country. NISCO represents the first large scale power project devoted solely to the burning of petroleum coke, an opportunity fuel," says Ken Richardson, NISCO project manager. "This was an opportunity for the NISCO participants to do something of great

significance."

NISCO was formed after the three industrial partners and GSU discussed ways to stabilize rising energy costs. NISCO is set up to sell electricity to GSU and steam to Vista. GSU, in turn, sells electricity to all three partners. "This is a win-win situation for everyone involved," says Richardson.

Generating units 1 and 2 at Nelson Station in Westlake were sold to NISCO and have been fueled by natural gas since the project's beginning. The NISCO units, operated by GSU, are capable of generating 200 megawatts of electricity and 55,000 pounds of steam per hour.

NISCO is currently involved in a \$192 million construction project, funded by the three industrial partners, to build

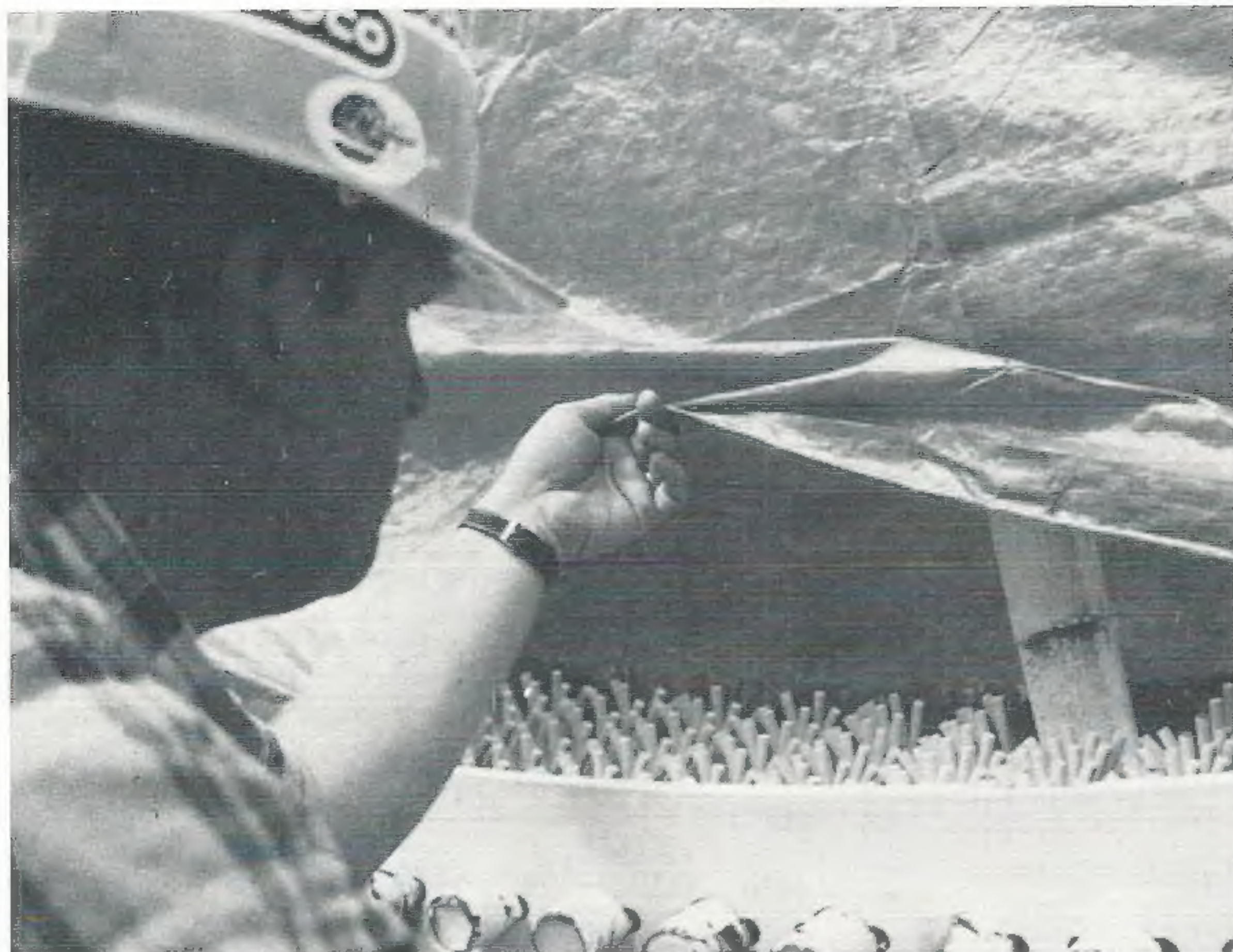
circulating fluidized bed boilers to burn a low-cost fuel, locally produced petroleum coke.

"The construction is well underway to meet our startup of May 1992," says Richardson. The conversion includes the installation of two circulating fluidized bed combustors.

According to Bennie Primeaux, NISCO spokesperson, petroleum coke, a by product of Conoco and Citgo refineries, can be burned efficiently and cleanly in circulating fluidized bed combustors. "This technology represents a significant advancement in the ability to burn petroleum coke in an environmentally sound manner," says Primeaux.

Circulating fluidized bed combustion is a proven method of producing steam by burning fuel with ground limestone in a





*Left, Richardson notes the studs used in the Foster Wheeler cyclone to secure the refractory on the inside wall. Above, Lee Cannon (L), test electrical coordinator, Nelson Station, tells Richardson about taking out three lines so construction machines could move in safely. "Safety is very important out here," says Richardson.*

combustion chamber. The limestone absorbs at least 90 percent of the sulphur emissions from the petroleum coke, avoiding release into the environment. The ash will be initially stored at Nelson Station and marketed as road base or other construction materials.

There are several benefits provided by the NISCO venture. Industrial partners are provided continued incentives to maintain and expand operations in southwest Louisiana. Gulf States is able to retain large industrial customers thereby holding down the cost of electricity to customers.

Construction jobs should go as high as 540 with approximately 30 permanent jobs created when the conversion is completed. "We will encour-

age our construction contractors to make the hiring of Louisiana residents, particularly those from southwest Louisiana, a top priority for the NISCO project," says Primeaux.

Another benefit is the knowledge and experience Gulf States will gain in the operation of circulating fluidized bed combustion units. "GSU will be the operator of the facility and will benefit from their involvement in this new technology," says Richardson.

A positive point for the NISCO project is its fuel source. Being locally produced, in plentiful supply and low in cost, petroleum coke further improves the fuel diversification for the power industry.

"This is an innovative project

that's a big plus for GSU," says Richardson. "Gulf States was a key player in the whole project and that demonstrates a willingness to work with industry."

Richardson says NISCO is unique in the number of partners and the number of people wanting to know how it works. "I recently received a call from another utility in Texas wanting to know more about NISCO because they have all the ingredients to do a similar project."

Primeaux concludes, "This venture provides the best combination of economic and environmental benefits to area industries, GSU and its customers and the local community."

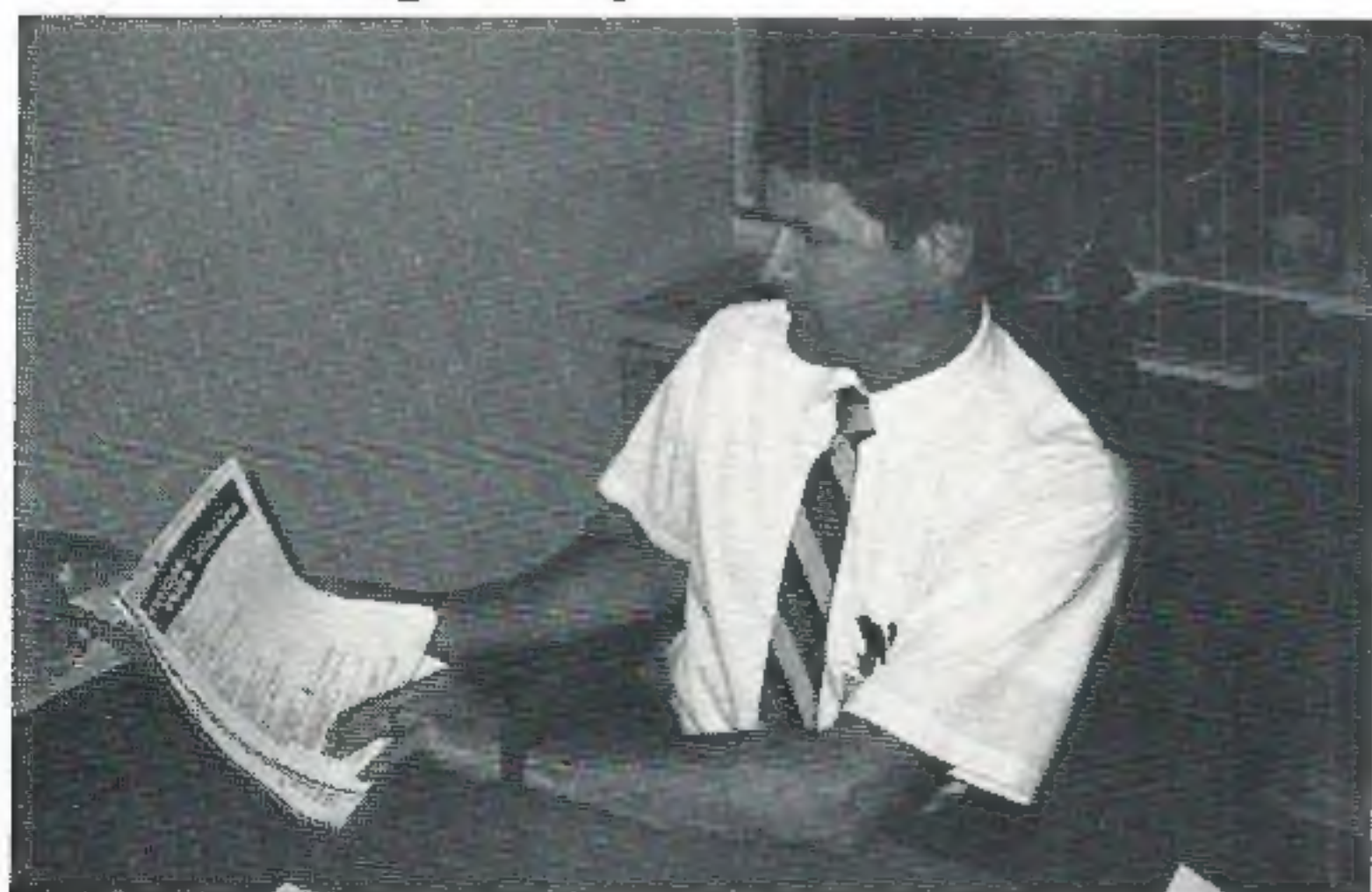


# GSU reservists ready to serve

by Mike Rodgers

Most of us learned on Aug. 2 Iraq had invaded the country of Kuwait. Little did we know the impact it would have on the world and that 20 days later, President Bush would call, to active duty, thousands of military reservists including several GSU employees.

"It's my duty. If I'm called, I have to go," says Darryl Pierce, senior engineering assistant, Beaumont. Having served active duty in the army, time in the National Guard and now in his sixth year in the local Army Reserves, military service is an important part of his life. Pierce holds the rank of staff sergeant and trains soldiers in food service. In the event of a call to active duty, he believes he would likely remain state-side, continuing his training specialty.



*Walston reviews a Western Union telegram announcing selected reservists.*

As for his family, Pierce says they support what he is doing. Summing up his feelings, he says, "I'm gratified to be doing something for my country. I enjoy the reserves and I like teaching other soldiers."

David Walston's attitude echoes Pierce's. "If they need us, we go. It's part of the commitment." Walston, industrial hygienist and OSHA specialist, Beaumont, is executive officer of a Naval Reserve unit located in Orange.

"We're a medical unit. They would need us in naval hospitals around the country to replace active duty personnel called to the Persian Gulf region," he says. A 10-year veteran, Walston holds the rank of lieutenant and has 30 people under his command.

While his family knows he may be called away, Walston says there hasn't been much discussion about it. "This is what the reserves have trained for. This is what it's all about."

Lake Charles Energy Auditor Harry Cormier reported for active duty on Aug. 27 and was sent to the Port of Beaumont to assist with loading military equipment leaving Texas for



*As new shipments of military equipment come in, Cormier updates the inventory of M-1 tanks.*

Saudi Arabia as part of "Operation Desert Shield." Cormier is a storekeeper 1/c with the Military Sealift Command, a reserve unit stationed in Orange, and serves as a contract officer/purchasing agent.

He is no stranger to this type of mobilization, having involvement with the annual REFORGER (Return of Forces to Germany) exercises at the Port of Beaumont in the past. "There is no way to compare the amount of equipment we moved with REFORGER to what we're doing now," he says, adding, "This is very big." Like other military personnel, Cormier is not permitted to discuss the possibility of a transfer to Saudi Arabia. "That information is classified," he notes.

Eighteen years ago, when the United States was deeply involved in the Vietnam war, Cormier served on a guided missile cruiser in the Gulf of Tonkin. He is struck by the difference in public attitudes then and now. "We have the support of Vietnam vets and the rest of the American people. I feel as though I'm with my family, even here."



# Employees show support with ribbons

People across the United States are showing their support for the armed forces in the Middle East by displaying yellow ribbons. In addition to employees throughout the system wearing ribbons, attaching ribbons to their vehicles and decorating work locations, a huge yellow ribbon measuring 172 feet long and 10 feet wide was affixed to the top of Edison Plaza, visible for miles.

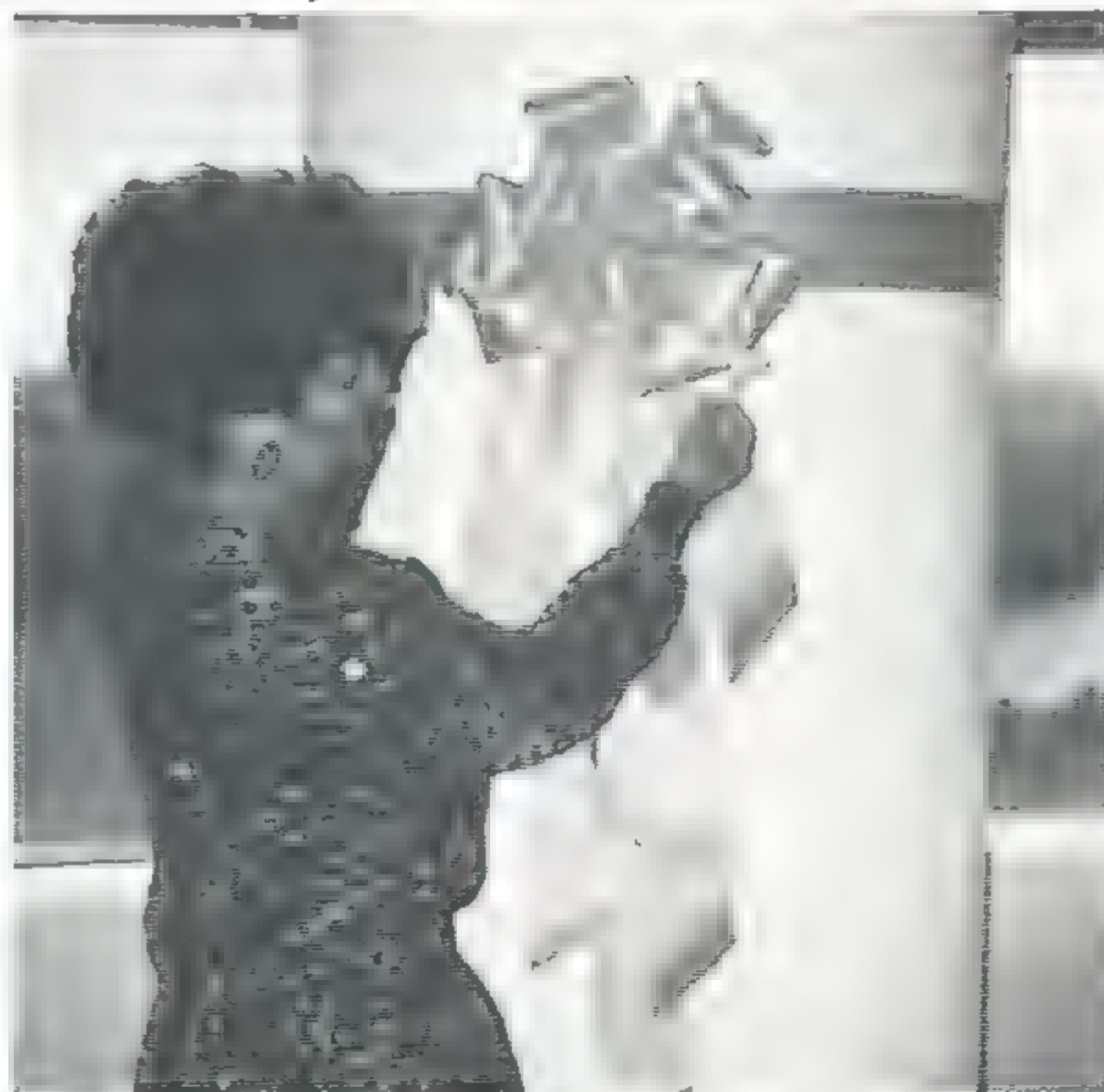
The ribbon project was the idea of Nancy Nesbitt, supervisor-purchasing services, Beaumont. "It's a way to honor those in military service. We have a lot of very patriotic people at GSU who are proud of their country," says Nesbitt. The ribbon was paid for by contributions to the employee advertising fund.



*Workers put final screws in the yellow ribbon on Edison Plaza.*



*In Winnie, (l to r) Roosevelt Green and Dicky Frugia tie a yellow ribbon to a GSU vehicle.*



*Ann O'Neill makes adjustments to a ribbon located in Human Resources in Beaumont.*



# SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

*June/July*

# 1990

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Accounting Services  
Beaumont  
**Rasiklal A. Patel**  
Rates & Regulatory Affairs  
Beaumont  
**Mark A. Bailey**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge  
**Robert G. Betancourt**  
Plant Production  
Willow Glen  
**Peggy D. O'Quinn**  
Division Accounting  
Lake Charles  
**Donald L. Weir**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge





# NEWS BRIEFS

*GSU employees (left to right behind the table) Tom Broussard and Paul Granger demonstrate Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) skills at the St. Landry Parish Safety Expo held in the Lafayette District. Other GSU activities included safety on the bucket trucks.*



*Above, Karen Yates, Baton Rouge marketing agent, presents Louisiana Lt. Governor Paul Hardy with a GSU "Louisiana Living" poster. The two are working together with the Retirement Inducement segment of Louisiana's Open House 1990. Yates serves as Vice Chair on a task force appointed by Hardy to coordinate the statewide promotion. Right, Gulf States recently took part in a recycling fair to open the new Beaumont Recycling Center. GSU was on hand to inform the public about the company's recycling efforts. Bryan Lawson, materials coordinator, describes how scrap poleline hardware is recycled.*





# MAILBOX



## Safety support

Sue Colbert and Myrna Irons of the YWCA of Houston write to thank **Sherry Overbeck**, senior district service representative, The Woodlands, for assistance with a safety program.

"Safety Town 1990 was a huge success...The YWCA would like to thank you for your donation of pencils which were used in the packets. You helped make the program fun, as well as educational.

"During Safety Town, as in all programs, the YWCA depends on its supporters and volunteers. Thank you for that support."

## Valuable information

"We recently had a new home built by a local contractor," writes Orange Customer Mrs. M.H. Dickey to **Ed Hutchins**, district supervisor-Orange. "When planning for this home, we contacted your energy consultant to inquire about the Good Cents plan offered by GSU.

"**Johnny Trahan** was helpful during our pre-planning and was available through each stage of construction. He was very knowledgeable regarding our energy needs, provided valuable information and was prompt in keeping appointments with us. He is also a very personable young man.

"Thank you for employing competent people like Mr. Trahan and for providing cost-efficient alternatives to help meet our energy needs."

Trahan, senior district service representative, is located in Orange.

## Memories forever

**Ron McKenzie**, division vice president-Port Arthur, received this letter of thanks from Susan Naquin, executive director, The Huguen Center, Port Arthur:

"This letter is sent to commend the GSU employees who make up the Reddy Volunteers, in particular **Ron Martin**.

"Last summer Ron Martin came up with the plan to have a fishing rodeo and give our handicapped students an opportunity to experience the fun of fishing...This spring, Mr. Martin contacted me to plan the fishing rodeo-Part 2...I must admit that Mr. Martin and the Reddy Volunteers completely outdid themselves this year!

"In a world where we are always quick to complain about inadequacies, at Huguen we believe in being just as quick to praise someone for going over and above the call of duty on behalf of others. Such is Ron Martin. He is a joy to know, a joy to work with, and his enthusiasm and friendship are priceless to our children.

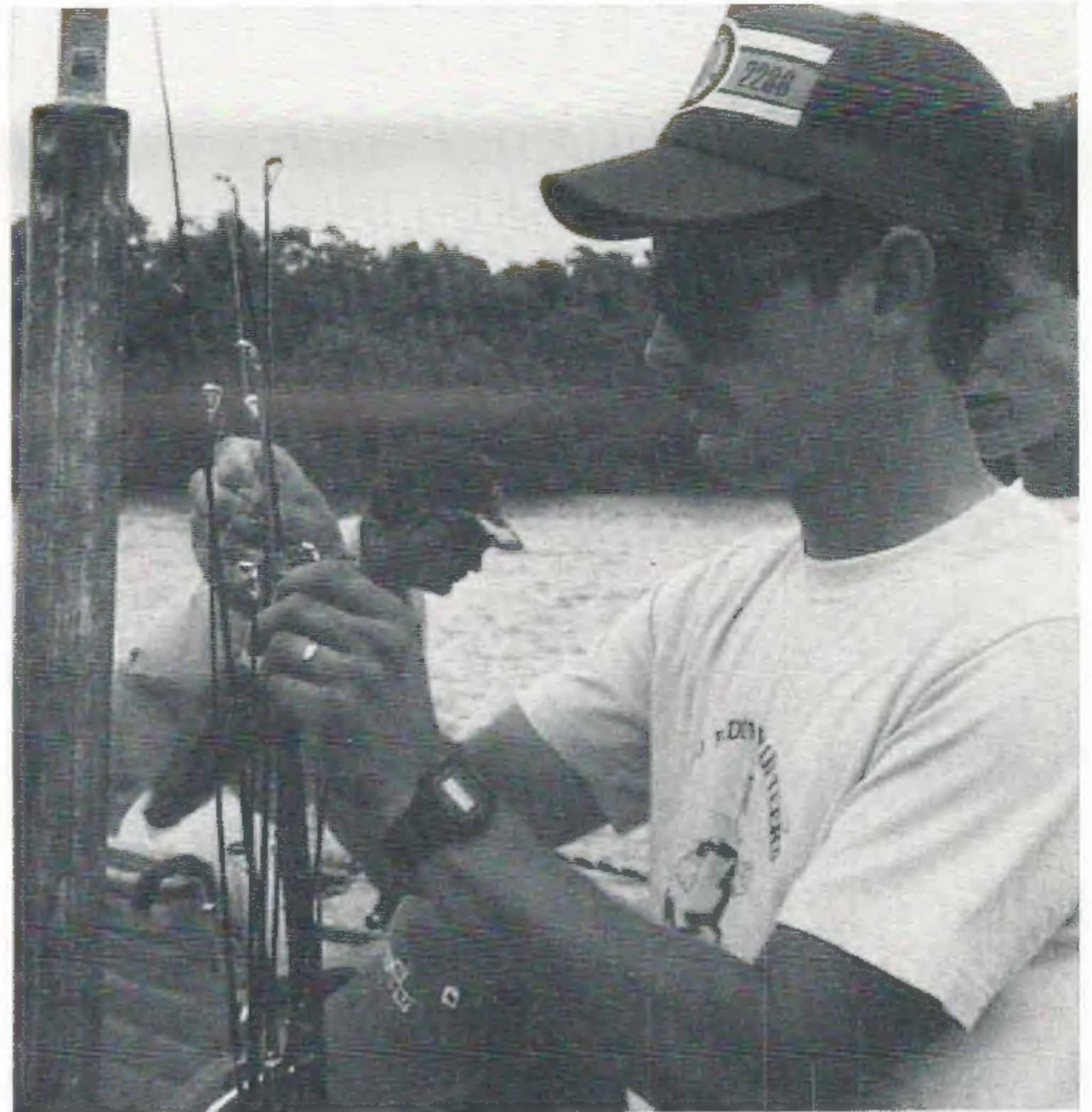
"Gulf States is to be commended for employing people of the caliber of Ron Martin and all of the Reddy Volunteers. They put their good intentions into actions two years in a row now and their time and efforts have given our special children memories to keep forever."

Martin is a test technician-1st class at Sabine Station.

## Thanks appreciated

Broussard customers Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Bernard sent this note to the Lafayette office:

"It was so nice of you to send us the beautiful thank you card...It makes us feel good."



*Martin straightens fishing poles and lines for Huguen students at the fishing rodeo held at the SPARC club near Sabine Station.*

## Clean commitment

"On behalf of the City of Lake Charles as a whole, let me express to you our most sincere appreciation for your untiring efforts and assistance in making Lake Charles the winner in the 1990 Cleanest City Contest," writes Lake Charles Mayor James Sudduth to **Ted Meinscher**, division vice president-Lake Charles.

"When one reflects on the physical appearance of the City just a few months ago, as compared to now, we have made tremendous improvements. We do, however, have more work to do and will continue our beautification programs through community support...please permit me to express my most sincere thanks and appreciation for your interest in making Lake Charles the Cleanest City."

## Beyond businesslike

The Essen Lane office received this note from business customer John P. Jennette, Baton Rouge:

"I called your billing office and spoke with **Ava Boyd** about an error on my part in paying my office electric bill. I found her to be very polite, courteous and efficient, above what I think would simply have been businesslike. Please pass my appreciation on to Ms. Boyd and her supervisor."

Boyd is a clerk at Essen Lane.

## Security light helps

"I wanted to thank you for your help in getting the security light put in on our street," writes Naomi Hairston to **Paula Colmer**, customer service representative-senior, Conroe. "...It really does help."



# PLAIN TALKS

P. O. Box 2951  
Beaumont, Texas 77704

Address Correction Requested

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Beaumont, Texas  
Permit No. 11

**SHE HAS A  
DRUG PROBLEM**  
*...her father..*



## Employee Advisory Committee

Debbie Gaiser, *Western Division*, (409) 756-5712  
Pam Williams, *Edison Plaza*, (409) 838-6631, x-4237  
Henry Welch, *Sabine*, (409) 735-7191, x-2264  
Kerry Zimmerman, *River Bend*, (504) 381-4298  
Dudley Clarke, *Lake Charles Division*, (318) 433-8965  
Sue Simon, *Port Arthur Division*, (409) 983-6651, x-2291  
Tommy Weeks, *Beaumont Division*, (409) 296-9826  
Charlie Naguin, *Baton Rouge Division*, (504) 379-5279